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POTATO LEAFHOPPER ON PEANUT

Empoasca fabae (Harris)

Description: Adult potato leafhoppers are small (1/8") pale green, wedge-shaped insects. The immature nymphal stages are the same general color but lack wings. Leafhopper damage shows up as a distinctive V-shaped yellowing of peanut leaflets, commonly referred to as "hopper burn".

Potato leafhopper on peanut leaf. (Univ. of Georgia)

Biology: Potato leafhopper is believed to migrate into S.C. from the south each spring. Females lay eggs in leaf veins and stems of peanut and many other hosts. Eggs hatch into nymphs in about 10 days and the nymphs go through five molts before becoming winged adults. The entire life cycle takes about a month, with about four generations per year. Leafhoppers damage peanut by removing plant sap and injecting toxins with their beaked mouthparts. Damaged leaves have reduced photosynthesis and may be shed from the plant.

Management: There are no known cultural controls for potato leafhopper in peanut although there are some reports of lower hopper populations in reduced tillage systems. The systemic insecticides applied in-furrow for thrips control will reduce, but may not totally control later leafhopper infestations. Leafhopper problems are

"Hopper burn" on peanuts. (Univ. of Georgia)

usually first detected by the presence of hopperburn symptoms. If hopper injury is suspected, be alert for flushing adults as you move down the peanut row. There are no clearly defined thresholds for leafhopper treatment in peanut. If hopper burn and active hopper infestations are observed, control is advised. See the most recent issue of the Ag. Chemical Handbook for control recommendations.

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